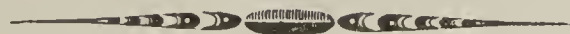


WOMBWELL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



REPORT

OF

MEDICAL OFFICER


FOR THE

YEAR 1897.



Wombwell :

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JANUARY 12TH, 1898.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE WOMBWELL  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I estimate the population at the middle of 1897 to be 12,858, supposing the same rate of increase has been maintained as during the last intercensal periods. The estimated increase over 1896 is thus 327. This figure is very near the natural increase or excess of births over deaths, viz: 310. The number of births registered in 1897 was 540, (3 less than in 1896) of which 20 were illegitimate. For the year the birthrate is therefore 41·9 per 1,000. The deaths recorded, (including two occurring out of the district) were 230, giving a death rate of 17·8 per 1,000. This somewhat increased rate is due to

INFANTILE DEATHS,

as 129 children have died under 5 years of age, whilst 90 of these were under one year. The latter means that the infantile mortality was 166 in every 1,000 births, although 16 were apparently born only to die—immaturity or something connected with birth being returned as the cause. In 1895 this rate was 189, and in 1896, 149; and as the decrease in 1896 was through diarrhœa being less fatal, so the increase in 1897, is through the virulence of

DIARRHŒA.

Of the 25 infantile deaths from this disease 21 occurred during the Autumn, when epidemic diarrhœa was rampant, when the temperature of the earth and the pollution of the soil, (vegetable or animal in origin), are favourable circumstances for the development of the micro-organisms which produce the disease. Epidemic diarrhœa is essentially a filth disease, and hence I would press upon you to carry out the bye-law under your consideration with regard to the paving of yards.

The paving and drainage of yards will act as a great sanitary benefit and a prevention to some extent of diarrhœa; because the yards will thus be easily swept clean and the refuse which I have complained about so frequently would be more effectively removed and there will be a greater incentive to cleanliness on the part of the inhabitants

You have yards well kept, some well paved, and with plenty of open space, but I must particularly call your attention :—

1st,—To that non-descript collection of houses lying between George Street and Alma Street. Here is a densely populated as well as closely built-on area, numbering over 500 souls and over 80 houses (some of these back to back), and including a Slaughter-house and Chip-potatoe Shop.

I am something at a loss to say whether these are yards or streets. If streets, there is no channelling &c. and there are several untrapped gullies, with two or three clusters of privy-middens which should not be in streets. If yards, then they should be properly levelled down, paved, and water-carriage substituted for the privies. In hot summer weather all the air which circulates in here should have the chance of being pure. On a former report a committee visited this and other places and concurred with me in the necessity for reforms.

2nd,—A similar necessity for reform exists in Whitehead's yards in Hawson Street.

3rd,—At Broomhill, although we effected considerable alterations in the beginning of the year, the yards there are and outbuildings generally require attention which your new bye-laws will enable you to give. These are certainly some of the oldest parts of Wombwell and the comparison is very great between them and those recently built.

4th,—**TO THE SCAVENGING** affecting the whole district.

For some time past complaints have been made to me on my rounds regarding both the time and frequency of emptying the ashpits. I am aware the time is a difficult point but the frequency is a matter calling for your pressing attention, and I therefore advise that the whole subject be gone into. As you are aware, on the efficiency with which all refuse matters (but especially human excretal refuse) are removed, very much depends the health of a district like ours, where the air is sufficiently vitiated by the combustion of coal etc. I prefer water-carriage where it can be adopted, but since we have privy-middens let the scavenging be thoroughly done. I find in the Urban District there are 700 ashpits altogether and that 500 of these are in Wombwell proper, and scavenged by your own staff of 3 horses and carts and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  men, which allows your sanitary Inspector to empty them only once in two months, and sometimes even at a longer period; whilst Jump, Hemingfield, Tingle-bridge and Lundhill, (where there are 200 ashpits) have to be attended to in a haphazard manner, by farmers when not using their own horses. This latter system I do not agree with. Again bell cart refuse is allowed to be left far too long. It ought to be removed once a week at least. Altogether I think it is



necessary to have more men and horses, I do not complain of the staff being inefficient, but of its being insufficient.

NUISANCES.

During 1897, 54 Notices for abatement of Nuisances have been served. There has been no difficulty in getting them attended to except at Smithley Cottages, where we had to procure authority from you to prosecute, and the Magistrates decided in our favour.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

I had to call your attention to the infringement of the bye-laws in regard to these, but as you have adopted the Model Bye-laws regarding them, it remains simply to enforce them, or the only alternative will be the construction of a public Slaughter-house.

THE HEALTH OF THE TOWNSHIP

Was similar to 1896, judged by the death-rate of Phthisis (1·39 per 1000) and the Respiratory death-rate (3·4 per 1000), but the Zymotic death-rate is much increased—3·34 as against 2·2 in 1896. This is largely owing as I pointed out, to the Epidemic of diarrhœa. Leaving the latter out the death-rate is 1·34 per 1000.

I have apportioned the deaths to the different districts and find that

137	are	accredited	to	Wombwell proper
11	„	„	„	Broomhill
8	„	„	„	Wombwell Main
18	„	„	„	Hemingfield
54	„	„	„	Jump

Total      228    (in addition 2 died in Hospital)

The last district has been most unhealthy. Reckoning its population approximately (from the number of houses 332) as 2000, the death-rate is 27 per 1000,—the death-rate of the whole township being 17·8 per 1000.

NOTIFICATIONS

Received during the year were as follows:—

	Wombwell proper.	Wombwell Main.	Hemingfield.	Jump.	Broomhill.
Erysipelas	6	0	0	1	0
Scarlatina	15	4	1	1	6
Typhoid Fever	14	0	0	32	0
Puerpural Fever	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria	2	0	0	0	0
Membranous Croup	3	0	0	0	0
Totals	40	4	1	34	6

Total 85, previous year 166.

## TYPHOID FEVER.

At various times from the end of August to the end of December, 46 notifications of this disease were sent to me. At the end of a hot dry summer especially, we expect its appearance, but the number of notifications has been much increased by its special incidence at Jump, where the conditions favourable to its spread were only too abundant. It has been well said that Enteric Fever often proves an efficient detective for defective drainage, and this has been well verified at Milton Square, Turkey and Inkerman Row, Jump.

In the course of the thorough renovation of the whole drainage system insisted upon, we found such defects as 4" pipes repaired with a 6", broken collars, pipes laid as if to carry sewage uphill, 3 sumps concealed under flags, (hitherto unknown and unsuspected) and filled with solid sewage, and at the lower end where these private drains connected with our main drain, they were so choked as to be quite useless. The sewage was therefore percolating into the soil and polluting it. In several cases it had found its way into the cellars and as many traps and sink-pipes were inefficient, sewer gas would also find its way into the houses and spread the disease. It was with difficulty the owner of these houses was brought to see the necessity for alterations; but I am much pleased to say they are being carried out to the satisfaction of your officials.

The drains have been relayed, asphaltting is now being done, and proper channels made for the conveyance of surface water.

Among the other causes of this heavy incidence I would instance,—

1st,—**PRIVY-MIDDENS.** On the Notification of a case these were emptied and disinfectants freely used; but the construction of them is too much "out of date". They are therefore ordered to be re-modelled. In addition however to this I would suggest water carriage to be substituted when our sewage system now undergoing alteration is completed. These houses are certainly amongst the worst in Jump, but many parts of the district contain very old houses, and there are many alterations necessary which your Sanitary Inspector is endeavouring to have carried out.

2nd,—**MULTIPLE-INFECTION.** In all 32 cases were notified from 21 houses, but 5 of these had several (namely 5, 4, 3, 2, and 2 cases). In the first of these houses, the case first attacked had been nursed by the mother, with no medical man in attendance (fear of being sent to the hospital being the reason given), and no notification was sent to me. No care had been taken of the excreta, and the four others thus acquired the disease. In spite of all persuasion they refused hospital accomodation and three died.

## HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION

Was accepted by 7 cases, one of which died. At home 5 patients succumbed—equal to 18.7 per cent of the cases attacked.

Considerable panic was caused by a Medical Man attributing the outbreak to the water-supply but the analysis of Dr. Kaye, County Medical Officer of Health absolved it from blame.

In the other parts of the Urban District, 14 cases were notified as occurring in 8 houses. The cause of this incidence was probably defective sanitary conditions and offensive privy-middens. Six of these cases were in one house—a very dirty one. Filth without and filth within, and a defective drain account sufficiently for this number. Fortunately all recovered. Of the other 8 cases 4 died, 1 in hospital.

## MEASLES.

There have been 8 deaths from this, one of the most infectious of Zymotic diseases. One occurred in February and 7 in December,—the latter being in the Jump Epidemic, which, at the moment of writing has not yet died out. It was deemed necessary to close the Jump Schools for 3 weeks, and to further prolong the closure for 2 weeks in this year (1898). I have to thank the School Board Authorities for their hearty co-operation in this matter.

## SCARLET FEVER.

The incidence of this in 1897 is but slight, compared with that of 1896, when 135 cases were notified. In 1897, 27 cases only were notified and no death recorded. Of these 13 were sent to the Kendray Hospital, and I think that in a great measure, this enabled us to check the spread. Prejudice against the hospital is not yet rooted out, and on several occasions sternness was necessary to accomplish removal. This prejudice was most displayed in connection with the Typhoid Epidemic, but latterly it died out.

Comparision of Annual Rate per 1000 of Estimated Population,  
Years 1896-97.

	Birth-rate.	Death-rate.	Zymotic Death-rate.	Phthisis Death-rate.	Respiratory Death-rate.
1896.	43.3	15.8	2.2	1.35	3.7
1897.	41.9	17.8	3.34	1.39	3.4

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

**JOHN N. MILLAR,**

Medical Officer of Health.



# 1897 — WOMBWELL URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.

MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES at subjoined ages.						MORTALITY FROM SUBJOINED CAUSES.																																						
Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 60	60 and up- wards	Smallpox		Measles		Scarlatina		Diphtheria		Croup (not Spasmodic).		Whooping Cough		Continued Fevers.			Diarrhœa and Dysentery		Cholera		Rheumatic Fever		Erysipelas		Pyœmia		Puerperal Fever		Ague		Phthisis		Bronchitis Pneumonia, and Pleurisy		Heart Disease		Injuries		Epidemic Diseases Influenza	
90	39	10	12	35	43	0	8	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	10	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	44	16	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			

AREA (Acres)	Estimated Population middle of 1897.	BIRTHS.			DEATHS.			ANNUAL RATES PER 1,000.					INFANT MORTALITY. Deaths under one year per 1,000 Births
		Males.	Females	TOTAL.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.	Birth Rate.	Death Rate.	Zymotic Death Rate.	Phtlisis Death Rate.	Respiratory Death Rate.	
3,851	12,858	273	267	540	121	109	230	41.9.	17.8	3.34	1.39	3.4	166.